

Queens College CUNY

Proposal for a General Education

COLLEGE OPTION LITERATURE COURSE

Please use one form per course proposal.

Instructions:					
1. Please save this document with the following file name: <discipline>_<number>_Proposal.doc for example: French_41_Proposal.doc					
2. Please provide a sample syllabus (using the provided template) with the following file name: <discipline>_<number>_Syllabus.doc for example: French_41_Syllabus.doc					
3. Send the proposal and the syllabus as an email attachment to the Academic Senate Administrative Coordinator, Brenda Salas (brenda.salas@qc.cuny.edu) and she will forward it to the UCC.					
Name and Email of Primary Contact	Kirsten Beck, kirsten.beck@qc.cuny.edu				
Course Prefix and Number (e.g., ANTH 101, if number not assigned, enter XXX)	MES 250				
Course Title	Literatures from the Islamic World				
Department(s)	CMAL				
Discipline	Middle Eastern Studies	Credits:	3	Contact Hours	
Pre-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	ENGL 110				
Co-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	N/A				
Catalogue Description	<u>This course is a</u> study of a wide range of literary genres and themes from the region usually defined as the Islamic world. The texts we will be engaging with are part of the Arabo-Islamic tradition, but are limited to neither the Arabic language nor the Muslim religion. We will be reading, in English translation, texts originally written Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and other languages. One of the main goals of the course is to understand the wide array of influences making up the remarkably rich and diverse cultures of the Middle East. The course will cover the time period beginning with the pre-Islamic period (6th century CE) to the 18th century.				
For What majors, if any, does this course satisfy a requirement?	The course is among the "Core Courses" for the Middle Eastern Studies Major, of which students must take four.				
Note any interdisciplinary programs (e.g., Africana Studies, Women & Gender Studies, etc.) for which this course may satisfy a requirement.					

If this course is regularly co-listed, please indicate the course(s) here, and whether the other course(s) meet general education requirements.	
Sample Syllabus	Syllabus Template Follows this form
Indicate the status of this course being nominated: ☐ current course ☒ revision of current course ☐ a new course being proposed Check below if applicable: ☐ This is a Capstone Course ☐ This is a Synthesis course ☐ This is already a "W" course ☐ Seeking "W" designation	

LEARNING OUTCOMES

In the *left column* explain the COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES that will address the learning outcomes in the right column.

A. All Queens College General Education courses

Queens College Option courses must meet all the learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

This course aims to teach students to engage meaningfully with literary texts. They learn methods of literary analysis and apply them to works of literature from the Arabo-Islamic world. The questions asked in the course address how literary texts construe knowledge and why they might do so: What constitutes literary knowledge in these texts? What do the questions we pose to a text tell us about our own understanding of what literature is and what it can or should do? How might narratives convey particular world-views? The course employs a number of techniques of literary analysis to respond to such questions. For example, students will consider how a text's conception of knowledge might seem to change if we were to remove or substitute different elements of the narrative (e.g., point of view, genre, characters, gender, setting, literary style). They will also compare narratives to help identify literary strategies at play.

Students will read literary texts at home, note their observations and questions, analyze excerpts, engage in and sometimes lead class discussions, and write two short papers that will be workshopped during class time.

Address how, in the discipline (or disciplines) of the course, data and evidence are construed and knowledge is acquired; that is, how questions are asked and answered.

The course construes literature according to the premodern Arabo-Islamic concept of adab; that is, as transmitted, humanistic knowledge that has aesthetic merit and performs a social function. Reading and analyzing this literature gives students the opportunity to meditate on the pervasive sociocultural ideas of the social worlds that they and the authors they read inhabit, equipping them with critical thinking

Position the discipline(s) in the liberal arts curriculum and the larger society

skills that will help them to synthesize knowledge gained in this class as well as in classes in other fields. More globally, the course challenges students to allow these texts to question their received ideas around animals' place in society and accepted expressions and definitions of love, topics that permeate contemporary global conversations in the light of the current climate crises and the reevaluation of romance and social norms.	
B. QC College Option Literature Courses Queens College Option LIT courses <u>must meet all the learning outcomes</u> in the right column. A student will:	
Students come to understand and express the advantages of reading literature through the many elements of the course: reading at home and in class, meditating on the questions that arise from the act of reading, class discussion that involves literary analysis, meaning-making, and debate, and workshopping and writing papers that explore the power of literature to express ideas, interact with society, and change preconceptions and norms.	LIT 1: Understand and be able to express the advantages of reading literature
In addition to short texts and secondary materials, students read four key texts from the Arabo-Islamic literary corpus, totaling over 700 pages of literature over the course of the semester.	LIT 2: Engage in the practice of reading.
Students read English translations of works of literature from the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu languages. These literary texts include poetry, essays, and narratives. Specifically, the four key texts from the Arabo-Islamic literary corpus are: Epistle No. 22 from The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity: a fable/essay from a 10th-century Iraqi encyclopedia of mathematics, astronomy, ethics, politics, theology, and more Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqdhan: a philosophical "novel," often regarded as the first, from 12th century Andalusia Farid ud-Din Attar's The Conference of the Birds: an epic Sufi ("mystical") poem from 12th-century Nishapur	LIT 3: Appreciate different genres, including narratives, poetry, essays, or drama in their original language or in English translation.

Nizami's The Story Layla & Majnun: a 12th-century narrative poem by a Persian poet In addition, the course includes readings from lyric poetry, persuasive essays, pseudo-historical narratives, and fantastical tale.	
Students produce arguments in class discussions and in their two written papers. Class time is be largely dedicated to discussion. For each class meeting, students prepare readings and write out three why/how questions about literary texts. In addition, each student is required to open and lead the discussion for the first 15 minutes of class on two occasions over the course of the semester. They are to engage their classmates in their observations and how/why questions about the texts. I will then lead the discussion for the rest of the session, guiding students to form, articulate, and test arguments based on the questions and observations they brought with them to class and honed over the course of their conversation with their classmates. Students submit two papers over the course of the semester. For the midterm paper, students are asked to compare the concerns, desires, and fears of human and non-human animals as expressed in two or more of the texts we have read. For the final paper, students are asked to articulate and defend an argument about how Majnun or Layla's place is their society, as depicted in Nizami's poem, affects his/her experiences, values, and choices. Both papers will be workshopped during class time before the final paper is submitted.	LIT 4: Through discussion and writing, develop and improve upon skills used in understanding and appreciating literature.